



Health Services
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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through leadership,
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January 26, 2010

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: John F. Schunhoff, Ph.D. 
Interim Director

SUBJECT: **UNIVERSITY HEALTHCARE CONSORTIUM DESIGNATED
AS THE PATIENT SAFETY ORGANIZATION FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES**

This is to advise your Board that the Department of Health Services (DHS) is designating University Healthcare Consortium (UHC) as the Department's Patient Safety Organization (PSO) for each County hospital and the two multi-service ambulatory care centers. On July 29, 2005, the Patient Safety Act and Quality Improvement Act of 2005 (PSQIA), which provides confidentiality and privilege protections for patient safety work product was signed into law. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released the final rule on November 21, 2008, which took effect January 19, 2009. A long-term goal of the PSQIA is to foster a culture of safety through Federal and State confidentiality and privilege protections for designated PSOs.

DHS has a longstanding relationship with UHC that includes the agreement for the Patient Safety Net, a proprietary, secure web-based, real-time event reporting system, which has been in place since 2006. On December 9, 2008 your Board approved an extension to the agreement for the Patient Safety Net through December 31, 2013. DHS uses this system to register and document adverse incidents and potential unsafe conditions that involve patients and visitors at DHS facilities. The UHC system is used by its members as an event reporting system and provides access to aggregated member data and analysis. UHC was one of the first 10 organizations who applied for and received the designation of a PSO by the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Since DHS, as well as other members, report data to the UHC system it is appropriate to designate UHC as the Department's PSO in order to receive the benefits provided by the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005.

This election comes at no additional cost to the Department as the usual one time fee of \$13,000 will be offset by Patron Equity Credits (PECs). The PECs have been earned through the Department's participation in UHC's group purchasing program and are available to DHS to offset other charges.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know, or your staff may contact Kim McKenzie, Director, Quality Improvement & Patient Safety at (213) 240-8283.

JFS:ct

c: Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors